



2013  
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# Rogue Valley Community Press

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50 years after MLK's march on Washington, Rogue Valley residents share a new dream of immigration reform

## Oregon leads way reducing student debt

BY VANESSA HOUK

It is a chapter of the American Dream. Children grow up and go to college to make a better life for themselves. But what happens when that dream is stretched out of reach for millions of people? Back in the 1950's, a four year Ivy League education at the University of Pennsylvania cost \$625. Adjusted to the rate of inflation, today that imaginary student would pay just over \$6,000 and yet the actual cost is more than \$45,000. On average, students graduate with a diploma in one hand and a bill for \$25,000 in the other. Student debt is crippling the future of our best and brightest people, but the Oregon Legislature is leading the way in changing that.

In July, the Oregon Legislature passed "Pay forward, pay back", a bill which is designed to help students deal with the escalating costs of a college education. In a move that The Nation calls "a progressive victory and a common-sense national model on an issue where Congress has recently been derelict at best." The bill lays a groundbreaking foundation for a funding model which will eliminate student debt at publicly owned state universities.

Sponsored by Rep. Gene Whisnant, R-Sunriver, students would pay nothing up front and would agree to pay roughly 3% of their incomes over a twenty to twenty four year period after graduation, which would finance the education of those students who are following them, The Higher Education Coordinating Commission will spend the next 18 months developing this plan for legislative approval in 2015. If approved and developed, it would change the way most young folks begin their lives and will help level the playing field for many.

Oregon Senator Jeff Merkley has presented a plan to quickly move forward. Merkley's plan is based on and complements Oregon's legislation and arose from a Portland State University student-led project. Citing that access to a college education is a pillar of the foundation of the middle class, Merkley said, "Our economy depends on a strong and growing middle

EDUCATION, 8

## Fukushima nuclear disaster threat is compounded by secrecy

BY STEPHEN LENDMAN

Japan's apocalypse continues. Emergency conditions persist. No end in sight looms. Fukushima's radioactive discharges can't be stopped. They continue. They're uncontainable.

At issue is by far the worst environmental disaster in history. It's multiple times worse than Chernobyl. It's an unprecedented catastrophe. It's reason enough to abolish nuclear power.

According to Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, about 300 tons of radioactive groundwater flow into the Pacific daily.

It's done so since Japan's March earthquake and tsunami triggered Fukushima's meltdown.

Tokyo Electric (TEPCO) says water's getting over and around "chemical walls." It can't be stopped. Three Fukushima reactors suffered meltdowns. A fourth was badly damaged.

The worst fear remains. Unit Four's structural integrity was seriously undermined. It contains hundreds of tons of highly radioactive water.

If an earthquake or other natural disaster occurs, its fuel rods almost certainly will catch



Ashland's 28th annual Hiroshima / Nagasaki peace vigil commemorated the victims of nuclear disasters. Photo by Allen Hallmark

fire. Radioactive emissions will follow. They'll compound what's already disastrous.

Emissions will continue long term. They'll circle the planet. They cause catastrophic harm.

Since March 2011, Tepco estimates around 20 to 40 trillion radioactive tritium becquerels leaked into the Pacific. So have large cesium and strontium discharges. They continue.

They're much more dangerous.

According to nuclear expert Arnie Gunderson, "the horse is already out of the barn." Leakage continues since earthquake and tsunami struck.

Radioactive water contaminates the Pacific. Gunderson's "experience with underground water is that - if it is serious at the ocean, it is more serious" on land.

Japanese officials proposed

erecting a barrier. At issue is preventing water from reaching the Pacific. Whatever's done "is two years too late and will be too late by the time" construction's finished, said Gunderson.

A barrier's not the solution. It causes another problem. "If the water can't go anywhere into the Pacific Ocean, it is going to build up onsite, which means that the nuclear reactors

FUKUSHIMA, 9

## This Labor Day sees rise in poor jobs

BY ROBERT REICH

The good news this Labor Day: Jobs are returning. The bad news this Labor Day: Most of them pay lousy wages and low if non-existent benefits.

The trend toward lousy wages began before the Great Recession. According to a new report from the Economic Policy Institute, weak wage growth between 2000 and 2007, combined with wage losses for most workers since then, means that the bottom 60 percent of working Americans are earning less now than thirteen years ago.

This is also part of the explanation for why the percent of Americans living below the poverty line has been increasing even as the economy has started to recover — from 12.3 percent in 2006 to around 14 percent this year. More than 35 million Americans now live below the poverty line.

Many of them have jobs. The problem is these jobs just don't pay enough to lift their families out of poverty.

But wait a minute. Over this same period, productivity has grown by nearly 25 percent. That means the typical American worker is now producing a quarter more output than he or she did in 2000.

So if wages have flattened or declined for the bottom 60 percent, yet productivity has increased, where have the gains gone? Mostly, to corporations and the very rich.

All of which gives some context to the strikes in recent weeks at fast-food chain stores, such as McDonalds, where workers are demanding a raise to \$15-an-hour from their current pay of \$8 to \$10 an hour.

And the demonstrations and walkouts at Walmart stores, whose workers are also demanding better pay. The average Walmart employee earns \$8.81 an hour. A third of Walmart's employees work less than 28 hours per week and don't qualify for benefits.

Few of these workers are teenagers. Most have to support their families. According to the

Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median age of fast-food workers is over 28; and women, who comprise two-thirds of the industry, are over 32. The median age of big-box retail workers is over 30. These workers typically bring in half their family's earnings.

They deserve a raise.

At the very least, the minimum wage should be increased from the current \$7.25 an hour to \$10.50 — and to \$15 in areas of the country with a higher cost of living. Had the federal minimum simply kept up with inflation from the late 1960s, it would already be well over \$10 today.

Contrary to the predictable pontifications of conservative pundits, such a raise won't cause many low-wage workers to lose their jobs.

Unlike industrial jobs, these sorts of retail service jobs can't be outsourced abroad. Nor are they likely to be replaced by automated machinery and computers. The service these workers provide is personal and direct: Someone has to be on hand to help customers and dole out the burgers.

And don't believe critics who say any wage gains these workers receive will be passed on to consumers in higher prices. Big-box retailers and fast-food chains have to compete intensely for consumers. They have no choice but to keep their prices low.

This means wage gains for low-paid workers are most likely to come out of profits — which, in turn, would slightly reduce returns to shareholders and compensation packages of top executives.

That wouldn't be such a bad thing.

According to a report by the National Employment Law Project, most low-wage workers are employed by large corporations that have been enjoying healthy profits. Three-quarters of these employers (the fifty biggest employers of low-wage workers) are raking in higher revenues now than they did before the recession.

McDonald's — bellwether for

LABOR, 10



Editorials & Opinion

Dear readers

If our lives had a soundtrack for the month of August, it would sound a little something like the lyrics from Don Henley’s Dirty Laundry. “Kick ‘em when they’re up, kick ‘em when they’re down Kick ‘em when they’re up, kick ‘em all around”

Although we were expecting it, we were still somehow caught unaware when Jason’s beloved grandfather, Dwight Newton passed away in July. There was a sense of numbness in those first few weeks after his passing, but by August, grief was settling in and making itself at home again. It was hard to get things done.

And then some advertisers sauntered away and we were left scrambling to print this issue without allowing our family to go into debt. We intend for RVCP to be a monthly publication and we work hard to make it so, but we hope that folks kindly understand that we have to meet the papers expenses. We aren’t going

anywhere and will continue to print as often as possible, but sometimes in order to keep our necks above the water, we may have to combine monthly issues. Of course we will still honor our 12 month commitment to any subscribers and will credit you all accordingly.

I write this on the eve of the 15th anniversary of the death of our son and what would be my father’s 80th birthday-- another reason why August feels like such a mean month. Even still, I am reminded of something George Elliott said. “She was no longer wrestling with the grief, but could sit down with it as a lasting companion and make it a sharer in her thoughts.”

Grief is such a long, windy, lonely road. I hope you don’t mind that we bring all of you in too, in talking and sharing and growing?

Peacefully,  
Vanessa Houk



Artwork by Soriya

RVCP would like to thank Soriya for the fabulous Dalai Lama artwork in our July issue.

Keys to business success

BY MARK KELLENBECK

As a small business owner, I believe success in business should come from hard work, creativity and good customer service—not political influence. Main Street businesses contend with big corporate interests every day, both our direct competitors and the larger companies we do business with, like health insurers and banks. We welcome these challenge—but we want to face them on a level playing field.

We don’t have that level playing field because corporate political spending stacks the deck against us. The Supreme Court’s 2010 Citizens United decision opened the floodgates for unlimited—and secret—corporate spending in elections. Now, corporate money is drowning out our voices and producing policies that benefit narrow special interests at the expense of our businesses, our communities, and our democracy. It’s time to un-stack the deck.

Almost 74% of Main Street small business owners in Oregon have said they felt that the Citizens United decision was bad for small business, while only 3% said it has been good for small business. Even though we’ve made strides here in Oregon— recently passing HJM 6 to become the 16th state to officially call on congress to draft and send to the states for ratification an Amendment to

the Constitution declaring that corporations are not people and money is not speech—fully fixing the damages created by the Citizens United decision and others is a long road and we still have a ways to go.

That said, there is a short-term remedy: a proposal for a new rule at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission requiring publicly traded companies to disclose their political spending. As a small business owner, I hope the SEC acts quickly to adopt this proposal.

There is a tradition of hard, honest work here in Oregon, and I want to make sure that is recognized and acknowledged. How can we say that we live in a fair and balanced democracy when the super wealthy and big business can secretly and discretely buy their way into politics?

We’ve heard time and time again from the U.S. Chamber and the Big Business lobby that these types of secret spending are good for small business. In fact U.S. Chamber of Commerce CEO, Tom Donohue, publicizes the “deniability” offered by the U.S. Chamber as a benefit to corporations that want to influence elections without leaving a trace of their corporate “fingerprints.”

Let me get one thing straight. When the defenders of secret campaign spending, like the U.S. Chamber says they’re speaking for small business, they’re NOT speaking for me and other Oregon Main Street business owners. All it really does is let special interests push their agendas in the name of “small business.”

BUSINESS, 11

Liquid Plain newly opened at OSF

BY HUGH GARRETT

The Liquid Plain, newly opened at OSF as part of the American History series written by Naomi Wallace asks more questions than it answers. It was touted as a “breakthrough theatrical piece”, but there was no challenge to the barriers of theatre, if there are any.

I hope they didn’t mean that because there was a new vulgarity on stage, the play is inventive and new. Or was it a scene in which two blacks enslave a white? It proves a rule that what one is paid to write is okay, what one must write is more apt to have the kiss of life in it.

Anyone who knows what a “hand job” is will know what happened on stage. So what? That is the brave new world of theatre? “Breakthrough theatre” is about original new ideas and excellence, not new depths of vulgarity for way over done shock value.

Otherwise the play had good intentions. But the story however well written, was scattered, the well done direction led nowhere, and the superb acting, didn’t define whose story it was.

The play should have begun many scenes into the first act with Kevin Kennel’s entrance. He lifts the stage at full weight and makes the show air borne. There is also a great scene with old pros JP Phillips and Richard Elmore as two old sods waiting to die.

The show deserves to be liked and will be, as what OSF does best.

Hugh Garrett is a retired journalist living in Ashland

Your Social Justice News Resource

The Rogue Valley Community Press (RVCP) is a publication for the working class and a platform for marginalized voices in our community. Through RVCP, we aim to educate people about social justice issues and inspire them to create positive change. Published monthly, RVCP is available through subscription, local retail locations, and street vendors.

Contributions from the community are welcome, including articles, letters to the editor, short poetry, and photography. Send submissions to editor@rvcommunitypress.com. All writing accepted for publication will be edited with due respect for the author’s intent. Opinions expressed in RVCP are those of the authors, and not necessarily the editors.

RVCP is a proud member of the North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA). Contributions to RVCP may be reprinted in other NASNA member publications.

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Contact

Rogue Valley Community Press  
258 A Street #1  
Ashland, Oregon 97520

(541) 622-9483

editor@rvcommunitypress.com  
advertising@rvcommunitypress.com

Staff

Jason Houk  
Publisher

Vanessa Houk  
Editor-in-Chief

Charlie Delgado  
Advertising Manager

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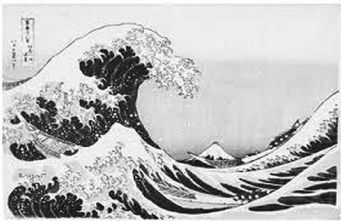
This issue is inspired by...

John Steinbeck, who wrote about the misfits and brought attention to the plight of working people through his numerous books and short stories. Steinbeck was born in 1902 in Salinas, California. He died in 1968 and his ashes were buried in the Pacific Grove cottage garden in Salinas with his mother’s family plot.

Some species of sharks have muscles that are not developed enough to allow them to pull water in through their gill membranes and out their gill slits so they can absorb oxygen from the water as it passes by. Called obligate ram breathers, they seem to have to swim constantly, without rest (and you thought you



never get a vacation) and although scientists say that they sometimes seem to pause in underwater caves, why this occurs still remains a mystery.



The Japanese woodblock print **The Great Wave**, created by Hokusai.

Olive branches have long been symbols of peace, but did you know that olive trees live for about 1,500 years! Gives new meaning to the phrase “peace is eternal”.



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# Life

## Ultimate Recycling

BY VANESSA HOUK

Some of my favorite people are often late. Oh eventually they show up and they are always sorry for being tardy and many times they have a good reason why they took so long to get here, because ultimately these are fine people I am talking about, they run just a little bit behind the rest of us.

For instance many of you might have missed noticing that April was National Organ Donor Month. I know, I know, it's the tail end of August, but that's the beauty of this. You didn't miss it, you were just late for it! We can call the tail end of August, the official National Organ Donor makeup session. It's a little less flashy than April's

acknowledgment, but it's no less important to the 110, 586 people who are waiting for an organ. It matters more than words can say to the families of the eighteen people who die each day waiting for an organ transplant.

And it's personal to me, not because someone I knew needed an organ, but because someone I love was able to be a donor.

In 1998 somewhere in Louisiana there was a twelve year old girl who needed a heart valve. I've never seen a picture of her and I don't know her name, but she and I are connected in a way that words can't reach because she was the recipient of my son's heart valve. According to the tissue bank the operation was

RECYCLING, 11

# Life

## KSKQ community radio debuts live morning show

BY JASON HOUK

Ashland's community radio station, KSKQ 89.5 FM, is debuting brand new morning programming. Now getting up, getting ready for the day and driving to work will be a little more fun.

Every weekday from 7:00 to 9:00 AM, KSKQ In The Morning brings live programmers in the studio, fresh new music and information that listeners need to start their day right. The morning program will broadcast the weather forecast and current conditions via live weather feed. Parents can plan their days with broadcasts of school lunch menus, school closures, late



starts and early releases. Drivers can plan their commutes with current traffic conditions and breaking news.

Short features ranging from Bird Note, Science Digest and Pulse of the Planet will be played as well as local music, news and events.

KSKQ producers hope the live, local show will help listeners ease into their day.

The new show will replace Democracy Now! at 8 AM. Listeners can still tune in to the award-winning program at noon

every week day.

KSKQ's mission is to produce community radio that empowers the residents of the Rogue Valley, builds sustainable and resilient communities through the exchange of ideas and celebrates cultural diversity. They are currently working on a capital campaign to increase their signal valley-wide.

Find KSKQ everyday at home, in your car at 89.5 FM or streaming on your mobile device at [www.kskq.org](http://www.kskq.org).

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*Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 1932*

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Occupy Medford is a local non-partisan movement in solidarity with democratic movements around the world - creating the conversations our political, financial, military and social elite won't talk about.

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email: [occupymedford@gmail.com](mailto:occupymedford@gmail.com)

**BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE IN THE WORLD!**

## Ashland supplements drinking water supply

ASHLAND PUBLIC WORKS

The City of Ashland Public Works Department began supplementing Ashland's drinking water supply with Talent Irrigation District (TID) water on August 14, 2013. "When our snow pack is low (this year it was 54% of normal) and the Ashland Creek flows cannot keep up with the demand, the City supplements its water supply with TID water," says Public Works Director Michael Faught.

Prior to adding TID water, staff consulted with the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), Drinking Water Program to verify the water source was safe to use. Staff will continue to monitor and test the finished water for compliance as directed by OHA.

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# The Nobel Prize in Literature 1949 Banquet Speech

BY WILLIAM FAULKNER

Ladies and gentlemen, I feel that this award was not made to me as a man, but to my work - a life's work in the agony and sweat of the human spirit, not for glory and least of all for profit, but to create out of the materials of the human spirit something which did not exist before. So this award is only mine in trust. It will not be difficult to find a dedication for the money part of it commensurate with the

purpose and significance of its origin. But I would like to do the same with the acclaim too, by using this moment as a pinnacle from which I might be listened to by the young men and women already dedicated to the same anguish and travail, among whom is already that one who will someday stand here where I am standing. Our tragedy today is a general and universal physical fear so long sustained by now that we can even bear it. There are no longer problems of the spirit.

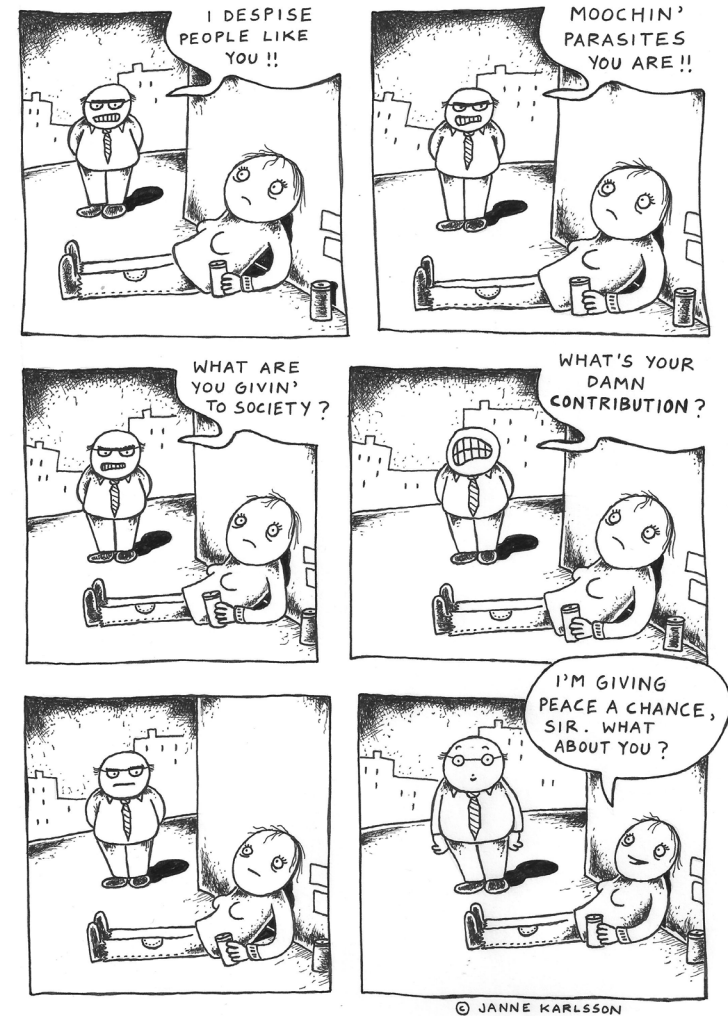
There is only the question: When will I be blown up? Because of this, the young man or woman writing today has forgotten the problems of the human heart in conflict with itself which alone can make good writing because only that is worth writing about, worth the agony and the sweat. He must learn them again. He must teach himself that the basest of all things is to be afraid; and, teaching himself that, forget it forever, leaving no room in his workshop for anything but the old verities and truths of the heart, the old universal truths lacking which any story is ephemeral and doomed - love and honor and pity and pride and compassion and sacrifice. Until he does so, he labors under a curse. He writes not of love but of lust, of defeats in which nobody loses anything of value, of victories without hope and, worst of all, without pity or compassion. His griefs grieve on no universal bones, leaving no scars. He writes not of the heart but of the glands. Until he relearns these things, he will write as though he stood among and watched the end of man. I decline to accept the end of man. It is easy enough to say that man is immortal simply because he will endure: that when the last dingdong of doom has clanged and faded from the last worthless rock hanging tideless in the last red and dying evening, that even then there will still be one more sound: that of his puny inexhaustible voice, still talking. I refuse to accept this. I believe that man will not merely endure: he will prevail. He is immortal, not because he alone among

# One Woman's Opinion

BY NOREEN HULTEEN


Political Progressives complain about the incredible inactivity of Congress. Well, just suppose that they are implementing a plan and meeting their primary objective. What if their plan is to keep you diverted from issues that are seriously important to our country and keep you focused elsewhere? Do they succeed in their plan to get you to focus on the issues they choose, while they manipulate away your democratic rights, and grab all the resources? I suggest that they have. Government responsibility is to collect taxes and manage tax funds; to keep the roads and airports safe and functional, to protect our borders, to maintain health of the economy and the environment. They must pass laws to ensure that we, the citizens, can function with equal opportunity. That doesn't mean we will all get the same opportunity. It does not mean that we are all qualified for every task. We are responsible to recognize opportunity and to be prepared to take advantage of it. Government must provide a helping hand in times of trouble, and to ensure our safety in our old age. For the safety of the future of our nation, the nation must provide every citizen with the best education his or her brain can absorb, and the best (basic) health care available. The Government is in the best position to do these things very well -- when they stay in the business of government! But they must stay out of non-government matters. The Constitution (the finest document ever conceived) specifies religion as an area where government does not belong. Most of the items constantly under review are items of religious origin. They are not the

business of Congress or State. As you read this, ask if you, yourself, are comfortable with the fulfillment of the promise of Government of the People, for the People, and by the People? I believe we know it is not happening. What can we do about it? Let us agree to stop allowing ourselves to be diverted. Generally I have been distressed by my Progressive companions' apparent inability to focus on priorities. Is the issue of abortion critical? Yes, but it is between you, your God and your spiritual leader. Is the issue of gay rights critical? Yes, but the Equal Rights Act applies to every human in our country. Is the destruction of the environment critical? Yes, but instead of arguing about the cause, we need to focus on the solution. Is the condition of the poor in this country critical? Yes, and like the environment, we should not be arguing about why they are poor; we should be focused on solutions. In my opinion, the number one priority is the exponentially expanding population. In 1900 the estimated population of earth was 1.7 billion; in July 2013, the estimated world population is 7.16 billion. Instead of seeking a solution to this problem our Congress is seeking to take away women's rights to choose whether to have children. This is counter-productive. and not the business of any Congress. Educated women have smaller families -- they only have wanted children. This is good for the earth and the community. It is the job of our government to write laws that offer freedom to all and leave no loopholes for self-appointed special people. We need more restrictions in the boardrooms of America, and less government in our bedrooms. That would be a start on our search for solutions.



Janne Karlsson is a cartoonist/illustrator from Sweden. Check out her work at: [www.svenskapache.se](http://www.svenskapache.se)

SPEECH, 11



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# Applause and Hiss

Well it doesn't come as a surprise, but it's a disappointment that Governor Rick Perry R-(TX) signed a bill which limits access to legal abortions. The measure bans all abortions after 20 weeks gestation, which is when many serious pregnancy complications arise.

"It is a very happy, celebratory day," Perry said just before he sat down to sign the bill. Democratic Senator Wendy Davis said, "When Governor Perry signed the bill, he signaled a clear break with Texas families," She said Perry and his party's elected officials "have now taken sides and chosen narrow partisan special interests over mothers, daughters, sisters and every Texan who puts the health of their family, the well-being of their neighbors, and the future of Texas ahead of politics and personal ambitions."

Did you know that 37% of the population in the United States are people of color and yet only 10% of children's books contain multicultural content? We applaud book publishers such as Lee & Low Books who are working on changing that and look forward to a future where all of our kids can find themselves represented in positive literature. If there was a soundtrack for it there would be the noises of loud, young rumbling tummies as the House passed the Farm Bill without nutritional federal food stamp funding. For the first time in decades the GOP separated the bill in a move that

critics deemed dysfunctional. The Republican led House pushed for the Farm Bill to move on to the Senate. About 48 million Americans rely on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) funding in order to keep food on the table.

While it wasn't met with appreciation from some locals, Ashland Mayor John Stromberg recently opened up about the Ashland City Council Listserv after a resident asked for information on which council members had opted out of the system. Stromberg's reply was, "If you want the Councilors to pay serious attention to something you have to say, I strongly suggest meeting with them in person and/or sending them emails. Same goes for me. And if you want to find out whether or not they are subscribed, why not ask them individually?"

It was shocking to hear that arsonists set a Medford Church on fire. In the early morning hours of July 5th two men were seen fleeing from Zion Lutheran on 4th Street after witnesses say they threw something at the cross outside of the church. The cross burned and a section of the church was severely damaged. There have been dozens of arson fires throughout West Medford this year and police have not been able to solve these crimes. Medford police ask that if you know anything about these cases, you can call 541-770-4783.

# Analysis Whistle blower heroes

BY LEAH EV IRELAND

Let's hear it for our heroes that face the firing line - whistleblowers. Being up against the Military/Industrial complex coupled with big government and world corporations requires a superhuman courage for truth. We are fortunate that in every generation certain characters are born who would give up their lives for freedom for all of us.

The idea of freedom of information, a free press, and that all people are equal serves the ideal that developing each informed choice is worth dying for. We have come a long way from the caves to landing on the moon, yet throughout history, the fight for social justice has mankind completely stuck.

We have those who would face crucifixion, burning at the stake, being hung by a mob, rape, humiliation, torture, or being force fed while in solitary confinement, for freedom for all. The new tyranny against the individual creeps in so invisibly all we have is extremism against "inaccurate statements," meaning government lies.

Genuine Whistleblowers cause no harm, take no lives. Happily, big power is so paralyzed with fear of Whistle Blowing they become more secret rather than transparent, admitting their guilt. Ben Franklin said: "If you give up liberty for security, you don't deserve either one."

The Patriot Act has limitless authority over our privacy as it progresses toward fully indoctrinating the next generation to take surveillance for granted. Toddlers playing with toy cell phones on their ears is seen as cute while cell and Smart phones are also listening and tracking devices. This turns dystopia into reality. Citizens are no longer kept in the dark in their country, they are kept totally out of their country in ignorance, unaware.

The "intelligence" community has Communism, Socialism, and now Terrorism to keep us in control through fear. From our American Revolution until now we are still in a fight for the basics of freedom. Democracy is first and foremost about a free and informed press.

To paraphrase Einstein: "Civil Liberties are not guaranteed in the universe." The constant fight in the struggle against greed and control madness endemic to mankind kills the environment, true progress, and social justice. Thankfully, the unjust give public truth more power than it has. They keep the pen stronger than the sword. The power elite create the need for the new journalism of Whistle Blowing. Desperate

truth tellers turn to extremes in impossible times. Fascism and the Nazi's survived because there were no Whistle Blowers who remained alive. Our court system and solitary confinement are the same thing, some say worse

This paper is the thread of steel that joins those who want to thrive and share in a just world. Al Jazerra - a free broadcast system out of the Middle East - is responsible for the Arab Spring. It is a fair network of international news that President Bush would not allow to be broadcast in the United States.

| Obama lifted the black-out on Al Jazerra and it runs freely on some cable company air waves.

Unfortunately we can best tell what our government is doing from outside regular U.S. news sources. But we have a lifeline with Free Speech TV that airs Amy Goodman's Democracy Now and carries Al Jazerra.

Support this paper, and find a cable carrier that airs Free Speech TV. Support the New York Times and BBC against Rupert Murdoch who is intent on ruling an all conservative media. It is one thing to leave our children a half dead world, quite another for them to inherit an accepted cultural slavery that keeps them from doing anything about it.

Leah EV Ireland lives in Ashland and can be reached at leahireland@aol.com.



There are countless people striving to stay committed to their personal growth, stay connected to their own potential, and failing to keep that connection going because they do not have a supportive group of like-minded people they can reach out to for inspiration and encouragement.

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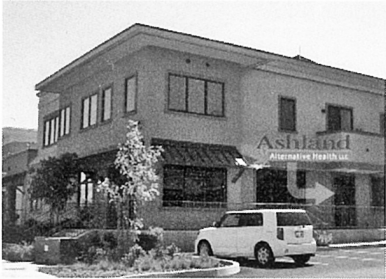
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# Nuclear vigil unites cultures and communities

## Visitors from Japan Lend Special Dimension to 2013 Hiroshima-Nagasaki Observance

VIA PEACE HOUSE

Organized once again by the Ashland Branch of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), local peace groups and activists braved smoke and heat to come together to promote a world free of nuclear threats.

This year, four visitors from Japan, including Dr. Tsugikazu Nishigaki, former chancellor of Hiroshima Jogakuin, a Methodist-affiliated K-graduate school, played a prominent role in the communities activities.



Photo by Allen Hallmark



Photo by Allen Hallmark



Photo by Jason Houk

Japanese visitors met Ashland's Mayor John Stromberg who presented a proclamation declaring August 2 through 9 as Japan Friendship Week. Ashland is one of 5712 cities mayors who have committed their communities to peace.

Our visitors from Japan have a special connection to our area. They were involved in various ways when the Rogue Valley Peace Choir performed in Kyoto, Kobe, and Hiroshima in 2006. Takako Sasaki, an artist, escorted the choir during their time in Japan. Etsuko Shinohara, a retired newspaper editor in Kobe, arranged for the hospitality. Dr. Nishigaki made contact with the Peace Choir in Hiroshima. And Mari Kishi, a well-known Tokyo artist, has recently collaborated with Hiroshima-born Medford resident Hideko Tamura Snider on a children's picture book, *Where a Peace Tree Blooms*. Hideko, a survivor of the bombing of Hiroshima, directs One Sunny Day Initiatives, a foundation that promotes nuclear abolition.

# If we deny health care to undocumented immigrants, can we save money?

BY SAMUEL METZ, MD

Let's break this into specific questions.

**Does the cost of immigrant health care exceed what they pay?**

Immigrants subsidize care of for native-born Americans. Medicare receives more in payments from immigrants than it spends on immigrant care, an annual excess of \$16 billion. For Social Security, immigrants generated an excess of \$12 billion in payroll taxes for benefits they are ineligible to enjoy.

**Is immigrant health care more expensive than that of native-born Americans?**

The total cost of providing

health care to all immigrants is estimated at \$39 billion annually. This figure is less than 2% of the \$2.6 trillion spent by all Americans. Of the approximately 12 million undocumented immigrants in the US, nearly 40% were covered by private insurance. The six million undocumented immigrants who were uninsured consumed \$4.3 billion in health care, a mere \$716 per person annually. This is less than one tenth that consumed by native born Americans.

All studies looking at this issue determined that immigrants, both documented and otherwise, consumed less

health care per person per year than native born Americans.

**Does providing health care to undocumented immigrants encourage illegal immigration to the US?**

Immigrants come here for jobs, not health care. Undocumented Latino immigrants, for example, primarily sought out states with employment opportunities. Secondary considerations were family and housing. In contrast, readily accessible public health care played a negative role: those states with the least generous public health care benefit programs show the most rapid rise in immigrant population.

To our shame, almost no one travels to the US, legally or otherwise, seeking affordable health care. Of medical tourists around the world who leave their home country to find affordable health care, 99% of them are Americans seeking care elsewhere. In fact, all other industrialized countries provide better care to a larger proportion of their residents at much lower cost than we do.

**If we exclude undocumented immigrants, will our health care spending go down?**

As demonstrated above, the absolute amount potentially saved in refusing health care

to those without residency documentation is small, less than 2% of total health spending.

Additionally, even this small savings disappears when we include the cost of enforcing such a policy. The Government Accounting Office found that state efforts to exclude immigrants without documentation from Medicaid were expensive – very expensive: states on average spent \$100 on administration to save 14 cents in health care.

Worse, these efforts to verify residency resulted in delay or denial of Medicaid to US

HEALTHCARE, 11



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News

# NSA surveillance program violates the constitution, ACLU says

BY KAREN MCVEIGH  
FOR THE GUARDIAN

In a detailed court motion filed Monday as part of an ongoing lawsuit against the NSA, ACLU says program has ‘chilling effect’

The National Security Agency’s mass tracking and collection of Americans’ phone call data violates the constitution, has a chilling effect on first amendment rights and should be halted, accord to a court motion filed by the American Civil Liberties Union on Monday.

In a detailed, legal critique of the NSA program, the ACLU warned that such long-term surveillance “permits the government to assemble a richly detailed profile of every person living in the United States and to draw a comprehensive map of their associations with one another.”

The motion is part of a lawsuit filed by the ACLU in June, one of several against the NSA following the Guardian’s disclosures via whistleblower Edward Snowden, of the agency’s mass surveillance of US citizens. Documents from Snowden revealed a secret Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court order directing Verizon to give the NSA all call detail records or “metadata” relating to every domestic and international call for three months, in a court direction that is renewed on an ongoing basis.

It “allows surveillance that is essentially indefinite”, the motion says.

The ACLU document is peppered with quotes from

literary, academic and other sources, to illustrate the danger of mass surveillance by the government, including the writings of George Orwell and The Lives of Others, an award-winning movie about the monitoring of East Berlin by the Stazi by director Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck.

In statements after the programme was disclosed, intelligence and government officials have stressed that the NSA does not collect the contents of US calls, only the “metadata”, such as the numbers called, the duration and timing of the calls. The information, they say, can only be interrogated if they suspect terrorism.

The legal motion argues that the NSA program, which the agency says is used for counter-terrorism, has overstepped its bounds. Quoting Representative Jim Sensenbrenner, Republican of Wisconsin, the author of the Patriot Act in 2001, it says the NSA has “scoop[ed] up the entire ocean to . . . catch a fish.”

The motion says: “The chilling effect of the mass call-tracking program is apparent: any person hoping to approach plaintiffs with proof of official misconduct would be understandably wary knowing that the government receives, almost in real-time, a record of every telephone call.”

The ACLU’s clients include prospective whistleblowers seeking legal counsel, and “government employees fearing reprisals for their political views”. Phone calls, even the mere fact

that a call was made, from such clients are “particularly sensitive or confidential”, it said.

A declaration in support of the motion by Edward Felten, a professor of computer science and public affairs at Princeton, warns that “even basic inspection” of the metadata on the calls made in the US each day allows the government to pry into the population’s most intimate secrets. They include, Felten wrote, the “rise and fall of intimate relationships” the diagnosis of a life-threatening disease or the identity of a prospective government whistleblower.

It can reveal, Felten wrote, “when we are awake and asleep; our religion, if a person regularly makes no calls on the Sabbath, or makes a large number of calls on Christmas Day; our work habits and our social aptitude; the number of friends we have; and even our civil and political affiliations”.

Calls to certain helplines, or support groups, for instance sexual assault, domestic violence or abortion clinics are all tracked by the NSA, the motion says.

The NSA’s mass collection of phone metadata was approved by the Fisa Court but the ACLU says that part of the basis for the court’s approval, a Supreme Court ruling called Smith vs Maryland 1979, involved narrow surveillance directed at a specific criminal suspect over a limited time period.

It argues that nothing in Smith “remotely suggests that the constitution allows the

government’s mass collection of sensitive information about every single phone call made or received by residents of the United States over a period of seven years.”

It says that the Supreme Court has “repeatedly recognised” that the government’s surveillance and investigatory activities can infringe on associational rights protected by the first amendment.

The ACLU’s lawsuit, filed on 11 June 2013, names James Clapper, the director of intelligence; Keith Alexander, the NSA director; Chuck Hagel, the defence secretary; Eric Holder; the attorney general and Robert Mueller, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. It says that the NSA’s ongoing tracking of their phone calls exceeds statutory authority and violates the first and fourth amendments.

# Working but still stuck in poverty

BY JASON GETTEL  
VIA OREGON CENTER  
FOR PUBLIC POLICY

There are many statistics one can summon to show how the economy is failing working Oregonians. But few are more telling than the share of Oregonians who live in poverty despite the fact that they work.

If you work and play by the rules, you should be able to provide a decent standard of living for yourself and your kids. Working full time should at least enable you to cover the basics and leave a little extra to put into savings or for getting ahead.

Yet most Oregon families who live in poverty are working families. In 2011, about seven out of every 10 families with children in poverty had at least one parent who worked. And

more than a fifth (22 percent) of all Oregon families living in poverty had at least one parent who worked full time.

In 2011, the share of children in poverty who lived in a family with at least one full-time worker increased. Put another way, in 2011, a poor child was more likely to have a parent who worked full time than the year before.

Single working moms have it worse than single working dads. In 2011, 33 percent of all single working mothers lived below the poverty line, compared to 20 percent of single working fathers. Among single parents working full time, 14 percent of single mothers lived in poverty, while just 5 percent of single fathers lived in poverty. What accounts for the fact that families

can’t escape poverty despite the fact that they work? The straightforward reason is that many jobs don’t pay enough. If you’re a single parent with two children, a full-time, minimum wage job won’t pull your family above the poverty line.

And even if the family earned enough overtime to escape poverty, that wouldn’t be enough to live a decent life. To provide a secure — yet still modest — standard of living for a family in Oregon, you need at least two-and-a-half times poverty-level income, according to a new “basic family budget” compiled by the Economic Policy Institute, a Washington, D.C.-based research organization.

The fact that families

POVERTY, 11

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# The Threat of the TPP to Public Health - Part 2

BY IVEND HOLEN

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is a secret agreement currently being negotiated between the US Administration and eleven other Pacific Rim nations, including Canada, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, Peru, Chile, Singapore, Brunei, Malaysia, Vietnam, and (just recently) Japan, and with the Agreement's provisions being crafted with the "help" of more than 600 corporate lobbyists.

The TPP agreement contains 29 chapters, but only 4 or 5 chapters directly refer to trade, with the remainder extending the power and authority of private corporations over governments and state-owned enterprises.

These chapters broaden corporate authority by extending patents and trademarks, reducing financial regulations including "investment barriers", restricting food safety and GMO labeling standards, reducing environmental regulations, restricting the power of unions to strike, banning of "Buy America" (and similar) policies, eliminating any requirement for firms to meet prevailing wages, and restricting the ability of governments or "state-owned enterprises" to provide medical care for their populations.

One issue corporate lobbyists are concerned over is that public health care entities have "unfair advantages" over private industry. These advantages include government subsidies, preferred tax status, low finance rates, and access to capital. An analogous argument of US banks is that employee-owned credit unions have lower taxes and other unfair advantages compared with private banks, and are currently actively seeking federal legislation to "level the playing field". Countries such as Vietnam, Malaysia, and Singapore, in particular, provide their populace with health care via state-owned enterprises fully or partially owned by government, and Japan provides its people a single payer health care system nationwide. The draft TPP provisions are believed to require health care institutions

to disclose any government advantages they receive and the signatory governments to give the same advantages to corporations. The TPP text outline requires that governments which provide advantages to its public institutions over the private facilities be sanctioned and punished by increasing tariffs, and specifically allows pharmaceutical corporations and others to challenge through its quasi judicial system the legitimacy of any reimbursement decisions made by public health systems.

A leaked section of the TPP, "Annex on Transparency and Procedural Fairness for Healthcare Technologies" reveals the conflict between private medical industries striving to keep their prices high versus the public health systems that are concerned primarily with controlling the healthcare costs of their populations. The corporate lobbyists drafting the TPP provisions do not consider the extension of patent protections on drugs and medical equipment to keep prices high to be unfair, but do consider the ability of public systems to negotiate lower drug prices with manufacturers to be an unfair advantage granted by the government. These provisions, already law in much of the US healthcare system, including Medicare and Medicaid, could be extended to the military's Tricare and the Veterans Health Administration systems (now exempted), in addition to those of all signatory nations.

Medical clinics in the US employ far more clerks and administrators than doctors or nurses compared with nations in the rest of the developed world. The US health system, due to thousands of different health insurance plans, each with different rules, wastes at least a third of its health dollars on this unnecessary bureaucracy. High prices in the private health sector drive up prices in the public health sector too, since Medicare is prohibited from negotiating drug prices. This is the system that serves as the model for provisions in the TPP,

since it enormously benefits the medical and private insurance industries whose lobbyists are now putting the final touches on the Agreement's provisions.

The state of Oregon is at the beginning of a renewed attempt to bring universal health care to all its citizens, with the state legislature having recently passed a bill, HB 3260, which requires a study to be prepared for the 2014 session comparing the costs and benefits of alternative health care approaches, including the current federal approach, and a "single payer" approach, which essentially removes private healthcare insurers from the existing market, plus two other alternatives. The legislature would then use the study to help craft and finance legislation to reform the healthcare system in the state.

A draft version of an Oregon Universal Healthcare bill, HB 2922, has already been introduced into the legislature. However, if the US Congress approves the TPP there is little chance that this measure or anything similar could ever be considered or be referred to the citizens of Oregon, since the intent of the legislation is contrary to the intent of the TPP, which is to inhibit public laws which would threaten the profits of private health insurers and the large corporate interests, in general.

If the state were to approve health care legislation deemed to threaten private industry profits it could be blocked immediately by an industry-adjudicated international trade panel which could then impose financial penalties on the state to compensate the corporations for lost "potential" profits. The nation of Mexico recently found itself on the losing side of an analogous NAFTA decision, in which it was ordered to pay over \$170 million dollars to Cargill, Archer-Daniels, and Corn Products Intl., giant agri-business firms, because it tried to restrict the amount of high fructose corn syrup imported into the country.

Oregon Fair Trade Campaign (OFTC) works in coalition

with labor, environmental and human rights organizations across the state to fight for fair trade policies. If you would like your organization to join in the effort to defeat the TPP they will do a presentation to your board or steering committee. Contact Ivend Holen at idholen@ccountry.net or (541) 779-5392.

Part 1 of this article, (July 2013, RVCP) discussed the adverse effects of extending the the terms of drug and medical device patents to 20 years, permitting the practice of "evergreening" to extend the patents' terms

and reduce the availability of generic drugs, of restricting drug formularies, and other means to discourage the availability of generics to keep prices high.

**Next month** "The Threat of the TPP to Public Health - Part 3" will summarize the current status of the TPP and present some tactics that concerned citizens can engage in to try to influence and deter our federal representatives from rushing this awful agreement into effect via proposed Nixon-era "Fast-Track" legislation.

## Education

CONTINUED FROM 1

class, and more than ever the road to middle class success runs through college." In a talk at the University of Oregon, Merkley added, "With students starting their working lives burdened by tens of thousands of dollars in debt, it's clear the old models aren't working anymore. We need bold new initiatives that put opportunity for middle class Oregonians at the heart of our economy."

The state would decide what schools would participate in the pilot program and students attending those schools could choose to enroll in the program.

Under Merkley's plan there would be a transitional period so that after students merge into post-collegiate employment, their contributions back into the

program would be deferred until they are making an income that allows for discretionary funds.

Our future workforce could graduate from college knowing that they have time to get their finances in order before the bills for that education come due.

And many students are excited about the possibilities of this plan. "The high cost of college and the growing burden of student debt are pricing students out of college and hurting our economy," said Nathan Hunt, a student at Portland State University. "We cannot afford to wait. As a student with over \$25,000 in student debt, I am thrilled to see Senator Merkley taking action to address the student debt crisis and make education accessible for students."

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# Funding shortfall threatens libraries

VIA PRESS RELEASE

If a sustainable source of funding for the libraries is not identified by July 2014, all branches, except Medford, will close and if no sustainable funding is generated by July 2015, then even the Medford Library will close. Library supporters have been sharing solutions with the County Commissioners and packed the house at a public hearing on July 18th. The most common suggestion was to fund libraries by creating a Special Library District. This is how most counties in Oregon fund their libraries, and once a Special

Library District is approved by voters, it keeps all library funding separate from County funding. It would mean county residents could rest assured that their tax dollars would actually go to the library. More help from library supporters is needed to ensure that libraries are kept open for future generations. It can be as simple as writing letters, joining door-to-door efforts in the community, or even volunteering to read to kids. If you can help, please contact Michelle Blum Atkinson at 541-554-6983 or mblum3@gmail.com.

## Fukushima

CONTINUED FROM 1

themselves will become unstable.”

“The water can pull underneath the nuclear buildings and if there is an earthquake, in fact the nuclear buildings could topple. So, by solving one problem, they are creating another problem.”

Gunderson believes contaminated water will keep discharging for at least 20 to 30 years. It’s the most radioactive water he ever experienced.

Cost is another issue. Cleanup involves around half a trillion dollars, says Gunderson. Most important is human health.

Epidemic cancer levels are certain. And not just in Japan. In early July, Fukushima’s former chief operator, Masao Yoshida, died of esophageal cancer.

He was 58. Tepco lied saying his death was unrelated to radiation exposure. Japanese children are experiencing a shocking 40% rise in thyroid irregularities.

Experts expect much higher numbers ahead. Fukushima’s an ongoing disaster. It persists. It’s not ending. It’ll continue for decades.

According to Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (IEER) president Arjun Makhijani:

- Fukushima continues to be an emergency without end - vast amounts of radioactivity, including strontium-90 in the groundwater, evidence of leaks into the sea, the prospect of contaminated seafood.
- Strontium-90, being a calcium analog, bioaccumulates in the food chain. It is likely to be a seaside nightmare for decades.
- It’s much more dangerous than cesium 137 and 134. It’s at levels 30 times higher.
- So to give you an idea of the level of contamination, if somebody drank that water for a year, they would almost certainly get cancer.
- So that’s one problem. The other is the defenses to hold back this water from the sea seem to be overcome.
- So now the contaminated waters, 70,000, 80,000 gallons, are flowing into the sea every day.
- Some of it will disperse and dilute. Some of it goes into the sediment, and some of it is taken up by the life in the sea
- And the unfortunate thing about strontium especially is that it bioaccumulates in algae. It bioaccumulates in fish.
- It targets the bone, because it’s like calcium. And so this is a problem. We don’t have measurements far out to sea.
- The Woods Hole Institute has done some surveys. And they were surprised by how much continuing radioactivity they found, but no clear explanation yet. The effect on human health’s expected to be devastating. It’s

already bad. It’s getting progressively worse. The genie’s out of the bottle. No end in sight looms.

Strontium-90 and cesium are both perilous. “Since strontium-90 is more mobile and also more dangerous biologically, (it) behaves like calcium, so it goes to the bone,” says Makhijani.

“It also bioaccumulates in the base of the food chain and algae. Ultimately because it does bioaccumulate and there is quite a lot of strontium, you could have a large part of the food chain near Fukushima being contaminated.”

If pregnant women ingest contaminated water, fish or other food, “the outcomes could be worse than cancer because then you’re talking about a much more compromised child in the sense of having a compromised immune system - it makes you more vulnerable to all kinds of diseases.”

Makhijani doesn’t know how Tepco can handle the problem. It’s uncontrollable.

“It’s very, very unclear to me how they are going to be able to get at this molten fuel, extract it from the bottoms of these highly damaged buildings and package it for safer or less dangerous storage or disposal.”

“This is an accident that’s shockingly not stopping.” It’s certain to worsen. It’s uncharted territory.

It affects the region. It’s humanity’s worst environmental nightmare. Nuclear rain affects North America and Europe.

Nuclear power’s inherently unsafe. Einstein called it a helluva way to boil water. It does so through massive heat. It turns it into steam. It powers an electricity generating turbine.

According to anti-nuclear activist Karl Grossman: avoiding potentially catastrophic accidents “requires perfection and no acts of God.” Humans and technology aren’t perfect. Natural and other disasters happen.

“We can’t eliminate them. But we can - and must - eliminate atomic energy.” Otherwise it’ll eliminate us.

Nuclear expert Helen Caldicott’s clear and unequivocal, saying: “As a physician, I contend that nuclear technology threatens life on our planet with extinction.”

“If present trends continue, the air we breathe, the food we eat, and the water we drink will soon be contaminated with enough radioactive pollutants to pose a potential health hazard far greater than any plague humanity has ever experienced.”

It doesn’t get any clearer than that.

**A Final Comment**

Coverup and denial followed Chernobyl disaster. Helen Caldicott called doing so “the most monstrous cover up in the history of medicine.”

The death toll was many multiples greater than reported. Estimates range up to a million or more.

The New York Academy of Sciences (NYAS) translated thousands of Russian articles and papers. It added “revised and updated contributions.”

“Written by leading authorities from Eastern Europe, the volume outlines the history of the health and environmental consequences of the Chernobyl disaster,” NYAS said.

“According to the authors, official discussions from the (IAEA) and associated (UN) agencies (e.g. the Chernobyl reports) have largely downplayed or ignored many of the findings reported in the Eastern European scientific literature and consequently have erred by not including these assessments.”

Fukushima far exceeds Chernobyl. Millions of lives are threatened. Perhaps future independent studies will explain. They’ll be too little too late to help victims.

*Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at [lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net). His new book is titled “Banker Occupation: Waging Financial War on Humanity.” <http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanII.html> Visit his blog site at [sjlendman.blogspot.com](http://sjlendman.blogspot.com).*

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# An American reporter in Cairo

BY MICHAEL CAMPBELL

From the Giza metro station I heard automatic gunfire and saw a huge plume of black smoke off in the distance.



Photo by Michael Campbell © 2013

When I arrived, the protest was already underway. Imagine a long street without any roads crossing it. On one end a couple high rises and the military. On the other end the protests and a mosque that had been turned into a makeshift hospital. I started taking pictures as soon as I arrived, being the only white guy I got a few strange looks, and some pretty angry faces. A few threatening protesters told me I couldn't take pictures and to leave

immediately. A group of 15 or so protesters started to gather around me and a bunch of angry Arabic flew back and forth. So ya... maybe not the best idea? Finally someone started

speaking English to me! After explaining to the crowd I was there to record and tell their story, they welcomed me into their family. They brought me a translator, water, anything I needed. Throughout the day I interviewed several protesters. From what I could gather the protesters are actually a mix of Morsi supporters and opposers. Those who don't support Morsi are protesting against the military who "take our

vote and throws it in the trash". While Morsi wasn't who THEY voted for, it was at least who the Egyptian people voted for. During the interviews, some told me that protestors had been burned inside of their tents in the camp raids earlier today. They said that Molotov cocktails were thrown into the makeshift hospitals, and estimates for the days fatalities ranged from 300-2000. Again, these are things I was told, I didn't witness them. Throughout the entire day I didn't see a single weapon amongst the protestors. Everyone had rocks, kids were prying files off building, women were smashing large pieces of concrete into smaller sizes. Everyone I met begged me to tell the world they were unarmed civilians being fired on by their military. However, I was warned by one person to "not take pictures of protestors with weapons". The group I was with immediately told me he was wrong, because the protestors aren't armed. So while I didn't see a single armed protester or firing from the crowd, take it for what you will. What I did witness were the deaths of several people, and the damage done by the weapons of the military. Bullets can't tell age. I saw a kid, about 15 years old, missing half of his head. I'm no

arms expert, but the protestors said he was shot by a sniper. They explained that snipers were perched in the high rise and would target photographers/journalists (one was killed today). At one point five or so protestors created a human shield, to get me close enough to attempt a picture of the snipers firing on the crowd. Unfortunately my camera and lens are pretty amateur and the

I was arrested, plus the camera would have definitely been destroyed. I decided to leave. On my way back I switched out SD cards and when I arrived at the metro station I photographed some of the military tanks. They grabbed me and took the camera. I told them I was just a tourist but they forced me to delete the photos anyways. I tried to make it as unbiased as an account as I could. While



Photo by Michael Campbell © 2013

## Labor

CONTINUED FROM 1

the fast-food industry — posted strong results during the recession by attracting cash-strapped customers, and its sales have continued to rise. McDonald's CEO, Don Thompson, was awarded a big-whopper of a compensation package last year, valued at \$13.8 million Yum!Brands, which operates and licenses Taco Bell, KFC, and Pizza Hut, has also done wonderfully well. Its CEO, David Novak, received \$11.3 million in compensation last year. The company enjoyed a 13 percent gain in annual earnings — its eleventh straight year of double-digit growth. Shareholders got a return

of 15 percent Walmart — the nation's largest employer — also continues to grow despite a sluggish economy, and pays its executives handsomely. The total compensation of Walmart's CEO, Michael Duke, was \$20.7 million last year, up from \$18.1 million in 2011. Total sales rose 5 percent to \$466.1 billion. Earnings per share rose 10.6 percent. Not incidentally, the wealth of the Walton family — which still owns the lion's share of Walmart stock — now exceeds the wealth of the bottom 40 percent of American families combined, according to an analysis by the Economic Policy Institute. It would not be a tragedy if

some of these shareholder returns and compensation packages had to be trimmed in order that low-wage workers at McDonald's, KFC, and Walmart got a raise. Indeed, if this nation is to reverse the scourge of widening inequality, such a trimming is necessary. Robert Reich is chancellor's professor of public policy at the University of California at Berkeley.

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Poverty

CONTINUED FROM 7

remained trapped in poverty despite their work effort is not just a tragedy for them, but also a serious problem for all Oregonians. Health researchers have found that children who grow up in poverty endure “toxic” levels of stress that harms their development, creating a barrier to academic and economic achievement. Poverty undermines their future and diminishes our potential as a state.

Making sure that work pays for more families requires concerted federal and state action.

A key step is to enact a robust jobs program that puts people back to work. A good example of work that needs to be done is repairing our neglected infrastructure. That would not only help the millions nationwide who can’t find a job, but it would also push up demand for workers — in turn, helping workers bargain for better wages.

At the state level, one priority is to strengthen the Oregon Earned Income Tax Credit, which allows low-income working families to keep more of what they earn to cover basic needs. Lawmakers, unfortunately, missed an opportunity in the recent legislative session to strengthen the credit. Hopefully, the legislature will take this key step when they meet again.

Second, Oregon lawmakers should better fund work supports for struggling families. For example, the Employment Related Day Care program, which subsidizes child care for low-income working families, is so poorly funded that eligible parents often must first be on a waiting list before getting the assistance they need to maintain employment.

And third, Oregon lawmakers should better fund job training programs, so that low-income and out-of-work Oregonians can gain skills needed to access better paying jobs.

While the sad reality right now is that too many Oregonians can’t escape poverty despite the fact that they work, it’s also the case that the right public policy choices can help make work pay for everyone.

Healthcare

CONTINUED FROM 6

citizens who could not provide required documentation.

*Is it legally right to reward immigrants who arrive illegally with free health care?*

Some advocate the US should punish criminals (i.e., people who enter the US illegally) by denying health care unless they pay for it themselves. This position runs contrary to an interesting legal principle: The only people in the US constitutionally entitled to medical care at public expense are convicts in jail. Shockingly, we find stories of native born Americans who commit crimes specifically to get the health care they could not afford as free citizens but they would receive as convicted felons.

It would take convoluted legal maneuvering to determine that undocumented workers who pay more in taxes than they receive in public benefits should be excluded from universal health care while convicted felons who pay no taxes are included.

*Are there still reasons to deny health care to undocumented immigrants?*

Some object to providing any essential public services to people who look different, speak a different language, possess a different skin color, or worship a different God. Why object? Because these different people might vote Democratic.

Sorry. Can’t help you with that one.

**“I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality... I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word.”**

**~ Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Business

CONTINUED FROM 2

This needs to stop now.

The path to a fair, level playing field for small business and the rest of our communities begins with the full disclosure of political spending. It is critical to ensure honest competition and a strong economy that rewards transparency and innovation, not secrecy and pay-to-play politics.

Senator Merkley (D-OR) can play an important leadership role here—he sits on the Senate Banking Committee. I hope he’ll use that authority to advance disclosure of secret money by urging the adoption of this new rule.

It’s time to move towards a more transparent, level playing field so small businesses can compete with a fair hand, not a deck that’s stacked against us. It’s time for the SEC to adopt the rule on disclosure.

*Mark Kellenbeck is the owner of BrainJoy, LLC in Medford and is the Co-Chair of the Main Street Alliance of Oregon, a statewide network of over 1400 local, independent small businesses dedicated to providing small businesses a voice on the most pressing public policy issues in Oregon and nationally.*

Speech

CONTINUED FROM 4

creatures has an inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance. The poet’s, the writer’s, duty is to write about these things. It is his privilege to help man endure by lifting his heart, by reminding him of the courage and honor and hope and pride and compassion and pity and sacrifice which have been the glory of his past. The poet’s voice need not merely be the record of man, it can be one of the props, the pillars to help him endure and prevail.

Recycling

CONTINUED FROM 3

successful and she got a chance to grow up. She’s about twenty five now and knowing that she might even have a child of her own by now helps heal my own heart.

Although it affects all of us, Organ and Tissue donation is not something that gets a lot of attention. Too many of you won’t even think about it until someone you love needs an organ. Some of you won’t consider it until you wind up needing a replacement part. It’s not that you’re a bad person or anything, it’s just that it’s hard to think about and even harder to talk about. Talking about it makes it so much more real. As real as it is for each of

the 110,586 people who are currently on the list, waiting.

So, I think it’s a topic that should be volleyed around the Internet and across Facebook feeds. I think some of you probably ought to sign a donor card at the DMV and tell several of your own family members that you’re brave enough to lend yourself to someone else because we’re all connected in some way and recycling heals us all.

It’s not too late.

*In memory of Dylan Dakota Houk, stillborn 8/29/1998.*


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# On the street

BY KAREN JEFFERY

Whereby our roving reporter takes timely questions to people on the street.

This week I stopped folks in Ashland’s Playwright to ask:  
“How’s your summer going?”

Christopher Wells (Medford, bartender at Playwright)



I’m working too hard... but otherwise having fun. Saw a few concerts in Portland - The Cult, Afghan Whigs...love music! I’m also mountain biking and taking long walks with my dog, hanging with friends...and my girlfriend.

Bob Evoniuk (Ashland, audio engineer and musician with LEFT, Siskiyou Summit, and Foxfire Trio)



I’m having an awesome summer...playing music, gardening, swimming. Summer in Ashland is glorious! And I’m getting married September 7th (big smile).

Ginny Deason (Medford, Retired - HR, Peony Farmer, Regional Ambassador for AARP)



I’m busy...enjoying. Having fun with family, friends, grandkids. It’s been a relaxing summer.

Roxy Ashworth (Talent, seamstress & owner - Roxy’s Retros)



I’ve been visiting the lakes of Southern Oregon, enjoying music and partying with friends, discovering wineries and local music talent. I’m busy working and getting ready to open my new unique boutique in September. It’s retro consign-ment - clothing, accessories, and furnishings. You’ll love it!



Sheya Rondeau (Ashland, Retired)

I’ve been enjoying lots of music. Went to cool Seattle for the Paul McCartney Concert. He played two and a half hours straight then 4 encores (with Nirvana jamming). Next month I’m off to see Jackson Browne, and last night I celebrated my birthday with LEFT. I caught the Oregon Country Fair in Eugene and am catching up with my children this summer too.

Karen Jeffery is a freelance writer, publicist, photographer, publicist, activist, and resource unlimited. Reach her at mauitutu@gmail.com.



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